

Public Health Department.

ANNUAL REPORT

ON THE HEALTH OF THE

Skelmersdale Urban District

DURING THE YEAR

1941



BY

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*Of Gray's Inn, Barrister-at-Law,
Justice of the Peace for the County of Lancaster.*

Medical Officer of Health.

—
ORMSKIRK:

T. HUTTON, "THE ADVERTISER" OFFICE, CHURCH STREET, ORMSKIRK.

SKELMERSDALE

**URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL,
1941.**

Chairman :—ED. DRAPER.

Vice-Chairman :—W. J. FENNEY.

T. A. FARRIMOND, J.P.

T. R. ASPINWALL.

WALTER JAS. BROWN.

JAS. HODSON.

THOS. HILTON.

HY. MARSDEN.

WM. SHAW.

JOHN JOS. VEALL.

J. T. WAREING.

JOHN WRIGHT.

WM. G. KEATES.

HORACE HEATON.

J. WATKINSON, J P.

ANNUAL REPORT.

*To the Chairman and Members of the Skelmersdale Urban
District Council.*

GENTLEMEN,

I have pleasure in presenting my Annual Report for the year 1941. In accordance with official instructions, tables of local populations or quotations from the figures supplied by the Registrar General, which may enable any substantial series of local populations to be reconstructed, have been excluded from the Report.

Yours obediently,

(Signed) HERBERT E. MARSDEN,

Medical Officer of Health.

November, 1942.

SECTION A. STATISTICS OF THE AREA.

Medical Officer of Health—HERBERT E. MARSDEN,
J.P., M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H., Barrister-at-Law.

(Medical Officer of Health for the West Lancashire Rural
District.)

Sanitary Inspector—G. A. GILL, Cert.S.I.B., M.S.I.A.

Area of District—1,942 acres.

Number of inhabited houses, according to Rate Books at end
of 1941—1,716.

Rateable value—£19,416. Sum represented by a penny rate—
£74.

Skelmersdale is part of the Ormskirk employment area but
no unemployment figures can be given as these are not
available during war-time.

SUMMARY OF VITAL STATISTICS FOR 1941.

	Total	M.	F.
Live Births (Legitimate)	105	63	42
(Illegitimate)	2	1	1
Stillbirths	4	3	1
Deaths.....	83	46	37

	Deaths
Deaths from Puerperal Causes :—	
Puerperal and Post-abortive sepsis	nil
Other puerperal causes	nil
Deaths of Infants under one year of age :—	
All infants per 1,000 live births.....	66
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births	67
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births	nil
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	12
,, ,, Measles (all ages)	nil
,, ,, Whooping Cough (all ages)	1
,, ,, Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	nil

BIRTHS.

The number of births recorded in the Urban District during the year was 105. This represents an increase of 26 on the figure for 1940, and an increase of 22 on the five years' average 1936–1940.

DEATHS.

The total deaths registered in the Urban District during the year numbered 83. Of this number 46 were males and 37 were females. The figure is 26 more than that for 1940 and 21 more than the average for the five years 1936–1940.

There was 1 death during the year due to Zymotic and Epidemic diseases.

INFANTILE MORTALITY.

There were 7 deaths of infants under one year of age, which gives an infantile mortality rate of 66 per 1,000 births.

CAUSES OF DEATH IN THE SKELMERSDALE URBAN DISTRICT, 1941.

Causes.	Males.	Females.
Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fevers.....	—	—
Cerebro-spinal Fever.....	1	—
Scarlet Fever	—	—
Whooping Cough	—	1
Diphtheria	—	—
Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	—	3
Other forms of tuberculosis.....	—	—
Syphilitic Diseases	1	—
Influenza	—	—
Measles	—	—
Acute polio-myelitis & polio-encephalitis—	—	—
Acute Inf. encephalitis	—	—
Cancer.....	5	7
Diabetes	—	—
Intra cranial vascular lesions	8	8
Heart Disease	11	9
Other Circulatory Diseases.....	—	1
Bronchitis	1	1
Pneumonia	3	1
Other respiratory diseases.....	—	—
Ulcer of stomach or duodenum	—	—
Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	—	—
Appendicitis	—	—
Other digestive diseases	—	—
Nephritis	1	3
Puerperal and post-abort. sepsis	—	—
Other maternal causes	—	—
Premature birth	3	1
Congenital malformation, etc.	—	—
Suicide	—	—
Road Traffic accidents	1	—
Other violent causes	6	—
All other causes	5	2
Deaths of Infants under 1 year.		
Total	6	1
Legitimate	6	1
Illegitimate	—	—

SECTION B. GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

LABORATORY FACILITIES.

Pathological and bacteriological specimens are sent to the appropriate departments of the University of Liverpool, Wigan Infirmary, Southport Infirmary and to Messrs. Evans, Lescher and Webb, Runcorn, for examination.

Chemical analysis of water, when required, is done at Messrs. Evans' laboratories at Runcorn.

Of one hundred and three swabs examined during the year for the presence of *Bacillus Diphtheriæ*, seventy-seven were proved to be negative. Three specimens of fæces examined for typhoid organisms were negative.

AMBULANCE FACILITIES.

No ambulance is maintained in the township by the Local Authority or otherwise. Nevertheless, the ambulance facilities are completely adequate.

The Ormskirk General Hospital and the Wigan Royal Infirmary take cases from Skelmersdale, and both provide ambulances. The Lancashire Public Assistance Committee also have an ambulance attached to their Hospital at Ormskirk.

The West Lancashire Rural District Council remove infectious cases in their ambulance by contract with the Skelmersdale Council.

NURSING IN THE HOME.

The Skelmersdale District Nursing Association is affiliated to the County Nursing Association. Its district includes Burscough Bridge, Lathom, Westhead, Hoscar and Newburgh, all of which townships are in the Urban District of Ormskirk.

The following table gives particulars of the work done in Skelmersdale by the Nursing Association during the year, 1st January, 1941 to 31st December, 1941.

CASES NURSED.					VISITS.			TOTAL.	
Midwifery.	Maternity.	Medical.	Surgical.	T.B.	Nursing.	Ante-Natal	T.B.	Cases.	Visits.
—	—	58	50	1	3675	—	43	109	3618

CLINICS AND TREATMENT CENTRES.

The Congregational Schoolroom in Witham Road is utilised every Wednesday morning as a Child Welfare Centre and Minor Ailments Clinic, under the direction of the appropriate Department of the County Medical Officer of Health.

An Immunisation Clinic is held every Tuesday afternoon at 2 o'clock on the same premises by the District Medical Officer of Health.

HOSPITALS : PUBLIC AND VOLUNTARY.

There are no hospitals in the town.

The Ormskirk Public Assistance Hospital, and the voluntary hospitals at Ormskirk and Wigan, provide ample accommodation for medical and surgical cases, and there is a maternity ward at the Public Assistance Hospital.

Infectious cases are admitted to the West Lancashire Rural Council's hospital at Aughton, by agreement with that Authority, whilst smallpox and cerebro-spinal fever cases go to Liverpool, also by agreement.

SECTION C. SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

WATER SUPPLY.

The supply of water in the district continues to be on the whole satisfactory in quality and quantity. 1650 houses are connected with the main.

The whole of the district is supplied with water by the Southport and District Water Board, from an artesian well, situated at Scarth Hill, in the parish of Lathom.

It was not found necessary during the year to examine the supply, as this is undertaken systematically by the Water Board who send copies of analyses to the Medical Officer of Health.

SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

The district is sewered on the partly separate system. The sewage from approximately 1,137 houses in the principal housing area is discharged by gravity through a 24 inch outfall sewer at the Council's Berry Street Disposal Works and that from 255 houses in this area, by a 15 inch outfall sewer at their Penny Lane Works.

The sewage at both works is treated by settlement and land irrigation, and periodical cleansing and repairs are carried out.

CLOSET ACCOMMODATION.

Privy middens—110. No. of closets attached to these middens—143.
 No. of pail closets—29.
 No. of dry ashpits (excluding middens)—5.
 No. of movable ashbins.—1502.
 No. of houses on water carriage system—1650.
 No. of fresh water closets—1502.

PUBLIC CLEANSING.

The Council now undertake this work by direct labour. The scheme was commenced in July, 1940, and has proved very satisfactory.

SUMMARY OF WORK DONE IN THE SANITARY INSPECTOR'S DEPARTMENT DURING THE YEAR 1941.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS.	Number of Informal Notices by Inspector.	Number of Formal Notices by Order of Authority.	TOTAL.
Dwelling Houses and Schools :			
Foul Conditions	5	—	5
Structural Defects	183	—	183
Dairies and Milkshops	1	—	1
Cowsheds	18	—	18
Bakehouses	12	—	12
Ashpits and Privies	—	—	—
Deposits of Refuse and Manure	1	—	1
Water Closets.....	55	4	59
Defective Yard Paving	1	1	2
House Drainage	43	6	49
Water Supply	1	—	1
Animals Improperly kept	—	—	—
Lack of Sanitary Dustbins	49	—	49
Insufficient Close Accommodation—		—	—
Smoke Nuisances	1	—	1
Dangerous Buildings	4	—	4
	374	11	385

SCHOOLS

The town is well supplied with four schools, three of which are voluntary.

The medical inspection of the children is undertaken by the School Medical Department of the Lancashire County Council.

The numbers on roll at the end of 1941 in all the schools totalled 924, exclusive of evacuees.

The only improvement in school buildings which has been carried out during the war is that the doors in all departments of the Council School have been altered so that they now open outwards. The yard at the Methodist School still requires paving and a dividing wall between the boys' and girls' lavatories at the Infants' Council School is still a necessity.

The Milk-in-Schools Scheme is restricted owing to the shortage of milk. Each school has one or two "milkless" days per week.

SECTION D. HOUSING.

The standard of housing in the district generally is very poor and is rapidly deteriorating owing to present circumstances, with very little prospect of any substantial improvement being effected in the near future. A thorough overhaul and reconditioning of most of the property in the area is long overdue but no action can be taken at the moment.

HOUSING STATISTICS FOR 1941.

No. of new houses erected during the year :—

(a) Total (including nos. given separately under (b).....	—
(i) By the Local Authority	—
(ii) By other Local Authorities	—
(iii) By other bodies and persons	—

(b) With State assistance under the Housing Acts :—

(i) By the Local Authority —

(ii) By other bodies or persons —

1. INSPECTION OF DWELLING HOUSES DURING THE YEAR:—

(1) (a) Total number of dwelling houses inspected
for housing defects (under Public Health
or Housing Acts) 209

(b) No. of inspections made for the purpose 418

(2) (a) Number of dwelling houses which were
inspected and recorded under Hous-
ing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 & 1932 —

(b) No. of inspections made for the purpose —

(3) Number of dwelling houses found to be unfit
for human habitation —

(4) Number of dwelling houses found not to be
reasonably fit for human habitation 209

2. REMEDY OF DEFECTS DURING THE YEAR WITHOUT
SERVICE OF FORMAL NOTICE. —

No. of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in
consequence of informal action by the Local
Authority or their officers —

3. ACTION UNDER STATUTORY POWERS DURING
THE YEAR —

SECTION E.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

SALE OF FOOD AND DRUGS ACT.

This Act is now administered by members of the
County Medical Officer of Health's Department; the work
was previously carried out by the County Police.

Thirteen samples of milk were taken during the year
and in one case proceedings were instituted but the case was
dismissed. No samples of any other foods were taken.

DAIRIES, COWSHEDS AND MILKSHOPS.

At the end of the year there were 115 cows on 8 dairy farms. 9 cowkeepers, 13 shops supplying milk in bottles, and 4 Registered Purveyors with premises outside the area.

During the year it was not found necessary to deal with any animals under the T.B. Order of 1938.

Cowsheds are inspected every three months. Their general condition is much improved but three of them are still in a bad condition.

MEAT.

There are no licensed slaughterhouses in the area,

BAKEHOUSES.

There are 6 bakehouses in the town and limewashing is carried out periodically.

SECTION F. INFECTIOUS DISEASES. STATISTICS.

	Smallpox	Enteric Fever.	Scarlet Fever.	Measles.	Diphtheria.	Puerperal Pyrexia.	Erysipelas.	Cerebro-Spinal fever.	Poliomyelitis.	Malaria.	Whooping Cough.	Pneumonia.
Cases	—	1	4	14	1	1	1	2	—	—	29	4
Deaths.. ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1	4

It was not found necessary to resort to school closure during the year.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES DURING THE YEAR, 1941

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES.	TOTAL CASES NOTIFIED.													Total Deaths.	Hospital.		
	Total Cases at all Ages.	YEARS.													Total Cases removed to Hospital.	Deaths in Hospital of persons belonging to district	
		Under 1 year	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	5-10	10-15	15-20	20-35	35-45	45-65	65 & over				
Smallpox																	
Scarlet Fever	41					4									1		
Diphtheria	1					1									1		
Enteric Fever	1					1											
Measles	14	3		3	4	2								1			
Whooping Cough	20	2	4	1	14	1	7		2	1				4			
Acute pneumonia	4													1			
Cerebro-spinal Fever	2				1	1								1	2		1
Acute poliomyelitis																	
Encephalitis Lethargica																	
Cphthalmia neonatorum																	
Erysipelas	1									1							
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	6								2	2	2			3	4		2
Other forms of Tuberculosis.	7					3	1	1	2						2		
TOTALS	69	5	4	4	18	4	19	1	5	6	2		1	9	10		3

The following table shows the number, monthly distribution, and nature of cases of infectious disease coming under the notice of the Medical Officer of Health during 1941 :—

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Totals	Removed to Hospital
Anthrax	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Small-pox	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Scarlet Fever	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	4	—
Diphtheria	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	1
Enteric Fever	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	1
Acute primary and acute Influenzal Pneumonia	—	—	1	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	4	2
Puerperal Pyrexia	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
Acute Poliomyelitis	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Encephalitis Lethargica	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cerebro-spinal Fever	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	2	2
Malaria	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Dysentery	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Measles	12	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	14	—
Whooping Cough	12	10	5	1	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	29	—
Erysipelas	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	—
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
MONTHLY TOTALS	24	12	6	4	—	1	2	—	4	—	1	3	57	6

SUMMARY OF ADMISSIONS TO AND DISCHARGES FROM THE AUGHTON INFECTIOUS DISEASES HOSPITAL, 1941.

ADMISSIONS.	Diphtheria	.....	.....	.....	1
	Diphtheria Carrier	.....	.....	.....	4
	Tonsilitis	.....	.....	.....	1
DISCHARGES.	Diphtheria	.....	.....	.....	1
	Diphtheria Carrier	.....	.....	.....	4
	Tonsilitis	.....	.....	.....	1
	Journeys with ambulance for patient	.....	.....	.....	9
	Journeys with ambulance for bedding	.....	.....	.....	11
	Houses attended for disinfection	.....	.....	.....	11
	No. of times disinfector was used	.....	.....	.....	4
	Rooms sprayed	.....	.....	.....	20
	Articles stoved	.....	.....	.....	46

TABLE SHOWING INCIDENCE AND MORTALITY
FROM SCARLET FEVER, 1932—1941.

	1932	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938	1939	1940	1941
Cases	11	8	10	9	12	7	10	1	—	4
Deaths	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

TABLE SHOWING INCIDENCE AND MORTALITY
FROM DIPHTHERIA, 1932—1941.

	1932	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938	1939	1940	1941
Cases	2	3	6	2	1	2	16	2	—	1
Deaths	1	1	—	2	1	—	2	—	—	—

Particulars of work done in connection with the scheme for Immunisation against Scarlet Fever and Diphtheria since the commencement in May, 1935, to December 31st, 1941.

SCHOOL.	Acceptances.	Total on register	Percentage immunised actually in school. 31/12/39.	Immunised against diphtheria only.	4 Injections against Scarlet Fever	3 injections against both diseases.	2 injections against both diseases.	1 injection against both diseases.	Final Schick test	Schick negative.	Negative after re-test.	Absent or left when results were read.	Later refused treatment.
Council 1935-40 1941	235 70	491 502	23.7	— 1	150 67	228 67	— 1	1 —	250 38	227 35	15 2	5 1	3 1
Endowed 1935-40 1941	93 45	126 144	51.38	— —	59 42	97 44	— 1	— —	84 2	73 2	— —	10 —	3 2
Methodist 1935-40 1941	110 21	135 142	56.33	— 1	49 20	105 20	— —	2 —	119 18	101 17	11 —	3 1	3 —
St. R'ard's 1935-40 1941	158 14	81 136	66.90	6 —	49 14	150 14	1 —	— —	136 19	134 18	1 —	9 1	1 —
Over 1935-40 School age 1941	12 1	— —		9 1	— —	1 1	— —	— —	3 —	2 —	1 —	— —	— —
Under 1935-40 School age 1941	115 46	— —		110 42	5 4	5 4	— —	— —	— 1	— 1	— —	— —	— —
Hospital 1935-40 1941	16 —	— —		15 —	— —	— —	— —	— —	1 —	— —	— —	— —	— —
Totals 1935-40 1941	739 197	833 924	48.29	140 45	312 147	586 150	1 2	3 —	593 78	537 73	28 2	27 3	10 3
Evacuees 1940 1941	136 30	66 97		5 1	74 20	89 27	21 —	11 3	44 —	47 —	2 —	2 —	— —

TUBERCULOSIS.

NEW CASES AND MORTALITY DURING 1941.

Age Periods.				NEW CASES				DEATHS			
				Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
				M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Years.											
0—1	...	...	...					
1—5	...	...	...					
5—10	...	...	..			1	2				
10—15	...	...	..				1				
15—20	...	...	...		2		1		2		
20—25	...	...	..		1		1		1		
25—35	...	...	...	1		1					
35—45	...	...	..	2							
45—55	...	...	..					
55—65	...	...	..					
65 and upwards	...	...	..					
Totals	...	...	...	3	3	2	5	3			
				6		7		3			

NOTIFICATIONS ON FORM I BY MEDICAL OFFICERS OF HOSPITALS.

	Public Assistance and General Hospitals.				Sanatoria and Pulmonary Hospitals			
Pulmonary :—								
Males				—				1
Females				—				3
Non-Pulmonary :—.								
Males				1				—
Females				1				—

Dispensary and sanatorium treatment for tuberculosis is administered by the appropriate department of the Lancashire County Council.

INFLUENZA AND OTHER RESPIRATORY DISEASES.

There were no deaths from influenza during the year. Four deaths were due to pneumonia.

